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Publication Date

2020

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Tools for Insurgency:

Popular Education and Transformative Urban Planning

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Master
of Urban and Regional Planning

by

Amanda Britney Zeidner

2020

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Tools for Insurgency:

Popular Education and Transformative Urban Planning

by

Amanda Britney Zeidner

Master of Urban and Regional Planning

University of California, Los Angeles, 2020

Professor Kian Goh, Chair

Popular education tools can be utilized to address complex urban regulations and unequal power relationships within urban planning. Guided by Friedman's argument that planning needs to have utopian thinking (2000), this research proposes what planning ought to be, rather than only focusing on what is. Using street vendor education as a catalyst for popular education models related to planning regulations, this thesis centers on the Vendor Power Guide in New York City as a main case study, and explores the components of the guide that made it such a successful tool for transforming community awareness around unfair vending regulations and supporting vendor interactions with law enforcement. Ultimately, this project identifies the ways in which urban planners should use popular education within their work to encourage citizen power and democracy.

The thesis of Amanda Britney Zeidner is approved.

Christopher Tilly

Victoria Turner

Kian Goh, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2020

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Thank you to Kian Goh, Chris Tilly, and Kelly Turner for their time and commitment to this research and to the UCLA Luskin Institute on Inequality and Democracy for their support.

Introduction:

Complex urban issues such as zoning and land use are difficult for the most educated and trained professionals to understand, let alone lay community members. Yet, these issues impact everyone, and often the most vulnerable first. Participatory planning has been theorized as a solution within the field of planning to address knowledge and participation gaps for decades (Davidoff, 1965). Participatory planning is meant to include community members and stakeholders within the planning process, and was a response to critique of top-down planning models. As it has grown in popularity, participatory planning has become somewhat of a standard within the field of planning for those hoping to claim that they worked with a community. While community involvement can be beneficial, participatory planning often continues to work within traditional frameworks of top-down planning implementation, at times used as a methodology to check a box for community input or participation and continue to rely on the knowledge of those in power with the right degree or job title (Monno and Khakee, 2012).

Insurgent planning, an offshoot of the participatory planning movement, attempts to successfully implement bottom-up planning where lived experience is legitimized, choosing to focus on experience and knowledge rather than title and position (Miraftab, 2009). Integral to tenants of insurgent planning is a criticism of power dynamics within traditional urban planning methodology. Within the frame of insurgent planning, people are planners because they live and work and interact within urban environments, which is a legitimate form of planning knowledge, distinct from traditional planning education or pedigree. Central to insurgent planning, therefore, are concerns about power.

Popular education is a radical educational theory that is grounded in models of liberation and mobilization. Unlike other models for communicating complex or technocratic concepts, popular education is a broad term that focuses mostly on a motivation to democratize knowledge. Organizers, planners, policymakers, artists, and community advocates utilize popular education models to arm residents with a means of liberation and empowerment, aiming to legitimize lived experience and also help navigate technocratic topics with collective power (Freire, 1968). These popular education tools take form in many different ways, including interactive art, education or teaching, and physical instruments like pamphlets or flyers. Popular education aims to create change by making knowledge accessible to all, particularly to those who are oppressed, left out of formal decision-making processes, or excluded from positions of power.

While popular education is not a term often associated with urban planning, planners and those working on land-use and planning policy work often utilize popular education as a tool for mobilization, harm reduction, and general education. Insurgent planning focuses on the harmful power dynamics of top-down planning, and popular education is a tool that can be utilized combat these power dynamics, democratizing technocratic planning knowledge, mobilizing communities, and organizing for more equitable planning practices. Existing research that links urban planning with popular education primarily looks at the research process, more specifically models of community-based research (Cornwall, 2011, Goodson and Phillimore, 2012, Halseth et al, 2016, Reardon, 1998). Existing literature that connected popular education and urban planning pays much less attention to the education process itself, and in particular to the tools used, and how those tools are

designed. Additionally, there is not research within urban planning that understands why popular education tools are used by organizers, how they are evaluated, and if they are successful. This thesis addresses this gap in practice and research. Additionally, this thesis asks, how can insurgent models of planning learn from popular education tools to deal with complex urban regulations and unequal power relationships?

A moment of convergence between popular education and insurgent planning is the Vendor Power Guide, created by the Center for Urban Pedagogy and the Street Vendor Project in 2009 to arm New York City street vendors with information and protection against fines and police harassment. This research is a case study of the Vendor Power Guide. What can the field of planning and design learn from the Vendor Power Guide and what does the guide's legacy convey about the importance of popular education work? How is the guide a model for using popular education within planning, and how does it highlight the importance of and need for insurgent models and popular education within the field of planning?

To answer these questions I conducted a qualitative content analysis of interviews with key informants and documents focused on key popular education tools. Seed interviews were conducted with known informants and used a snowball sampling approach to ensure a representation of key groups – street vendors, street vending advocates, designers, and representatives from the Center for Urban Pedagogy – were included in interviews. Content analysis of coded interviews was used as a means to understand the important role popular education tools play within organizing around land-use and planning policy, and how the evaluation and success of these tools play a part in broader people's movements. Additionally,

content analysis of the creation of visual guides for vending in New York, Los Angeles, and Santa Monica were used to highlight the legacy of the Vendor Power Guide and the power popular education tools can play within planning policy more broadly.

Literature Review:

Introduction

This literature review aims to contextualize academic framing of participatory planning, highlighting the different schools of thought within planning theory. The American Planning Association (APA) states that “the goal of planning is to maximize the health, safety, and economic well-being of all people living in our communities. This involves thinking about how we can move around our community, how we can attract and retain thriving businesses, where we want to live, and opportunities for recreation. Planning helps create communities of lasting value.” This definition is limited and does not acknowledge the political intricacies of the field of planning or the undeniable harm caused by the field of planning, however, it is helpful to understand how institutions such as APA are defining planning when delving into specific planning theories in the following literature review. How do these different theories view the legitimacy of community knowledge?

Additionally, this literature review acknowledges the limited scholarship on popular education within planning that goes beyond research best practices. There is not research on how popular education tools, based in liberation, interact with planning, with the understanding that planners have been operating, knowingly and

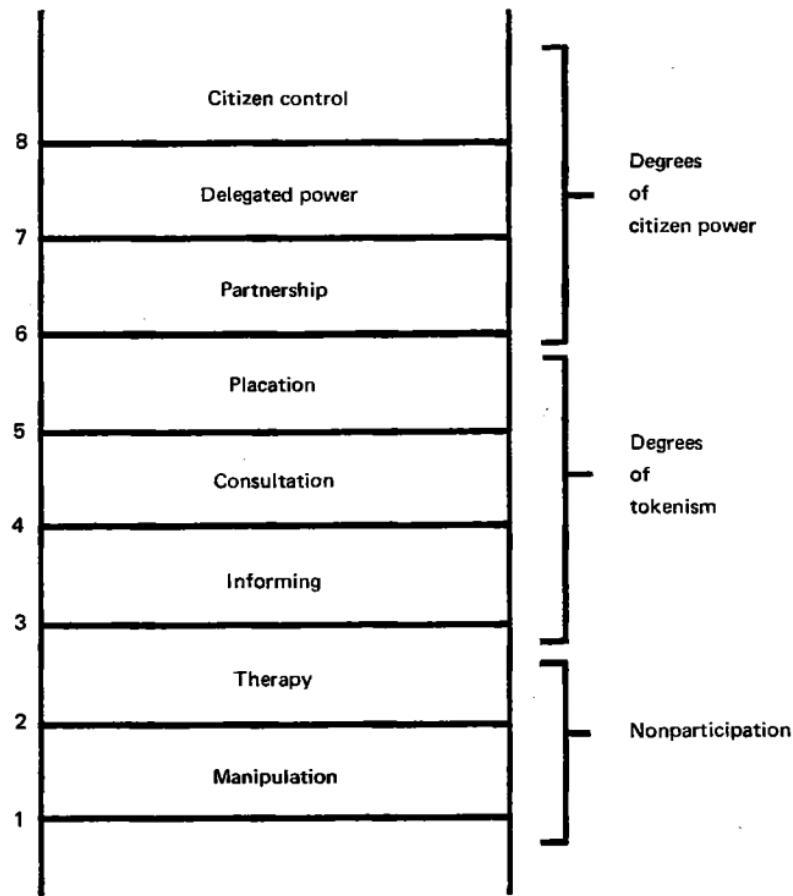
unknowingly, within an economic framework of increasing deregulation, privatization, and market-orientedness. Popular education tools are used to navigate oppressive planning systems and as a result legitimize community knowledge in a different way from popularized planning theory. There is not research that looks at the sustained impacts of this tool to determine if it is an effective method for mobilization. Participatory planning theory often aims to incorporate community input and knowledge into the planning process, and popular education is a tool which could help re-shape power dynamics within planning processes. This work attempts to situate popular education within the discourses about participatory planning.

Participation in Planning

While proponents of participatory planning would argue that 'participatory planning' differs in important ways from 'participation in planning' it is common for the two to be mixed up and used interchangeably. Monno and Khakee argue that there is often a large "gap between rhetoric and the reality of various models" of participation within planning (2012). The categories of this literature review highlight how ideas about participation differ, at times underlining the importance of power, and other times, suggesting models that Monno and Khakee refer to as "tokenist participation" (2012).

Sherry Arnstein is a critical scholar on the topic of participation and came up with the ladder of citizen participation, stating that while participation is the goal, there are different stages of participation that have dramatically different outcomes for communities (2010). Arnstein's ladder is seen on the next page.

Figure 1. Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation.



(Arnstein, 1969)

Each rung of the ladder of citizen participation has a different methodology and outcome. For Arnstein, while the rungs have different versions of participation, each of their success is determined by expanded democracy for marginalized communities (1969) (Kennedy and Tilly, 2019).

Most research about participatory planning situates it within a structure of professional planning and state-led initiatives that first sprung up within the 1960s and 1970s as a response to top-down and technocratic practices. Following failed state initiatives [urban renewal], there was a noticed and idealized attempt to shift

power away from fully belonging to the state. Often the discussions about this post 1960s participatory planning trend situates research within the formal field of planning, even if it acts as a critique.

Amelia Thorpe (2017), for example, states that no one definition of planning exists, and that planning as a field should be approached as something that extends “beyond the work of professional planners, and beyond the contributions they solicit from outsiders through various consultation and engagement processes.” She argues that, “when the subjects of planning advocate for changes to the form of the city, when they directly intervene in the built environment in ways that challenge, confirm or reinterpret official plans, and when they report, ignore or actively conceal violations to planning rules and policies, they participate directly and often materially in the practice of planning” (2017, p.577). By broadening the conceptualizing of planning, Thorpe notes that the process of participation started occurring far before the 1960s. She also notes that when participation is only discussed by planning professionals as either a new phenomenon or one that only benefits a formal and technocratic planning process, it discredits organizing efforts and means of survival that predate participation becoming a planning buzzword.

This thesis takes into account the numerous theories around participation and planning. In order to give context to these theories, the following are defined and aim to define how/if the theory legitimizes community knowledge.

Modernist

Modernist planning theory came to the fore in the era of large-scale urban planning and top-down approaches. Modernist planning emphasized big plans, visions that completely changed urban areas (Beauregard, 1991). As cities were growing and being designed to accommodate modern amenities the role of planning took new forms. Howe gives context to this vision: "In a big way, city planning is the first conscious recognition of the unity of society; it involves a new vision of the city: ... new terms, a wider outlook, and the coordination of urban life in all of its relationships. Moreover, it means a city built by experts" (Howe, 1913, pp 186-187). Within the era and thinking of modernist planning the so-called experts were the ones with power. Planners, in the most technical and official sense, wielded power over individuals and neighborhoods in the name of the common good.

Advocacy

Advocacy planning was first theorized in 1965 by Paul Davidoff who states, "planners should engage in the political process as advocates of the interests of government and other groups" (pg. 331). It was seen as the newest theory on planning motivations and scope. "Advocacy planning represents a departure from scientific, objective, or rational planning, which was the dominant paradigm of the post-World War II era. It is premised upon the inclusion of the different interests involved in the planning process itself" (Feld et al, 2010). Advocacy planning, like modernist planning, still gives the planner or trained professional the power, while assuming the expertise of the planner, but also suggests that the planner has a responsibility to advocate on behalf of both the government and community

interests within the political system and focuses on a need for pluralism (Davidoff, 1965). The planner is meant to advocate on behalf of the oppressed and excluded. Advocacy planning acknowledges that planning exists within and cannot escape political systems and that planning is responsible for balancing the needs of more than just the built environment and more than a singular set of principles or goals (Feld et al, 2010). At the core of advocacy planning is the understanding that the planner should advocate for the disenfranchised but is still responsible for balancing the multitude of needs within a city, and therefore community knowledge is legitimized through consideration, but certainly not brought to the fore (Davidoff, 1965).

Communicative

Communicative planning can be defined as “a planning approach where planners use dialogue to help people involved in a planning issue to gain a shared understanding of the problem and to reach consensus on what to do.

Communicative planning is positioned against systematic planning, in which planners use the expertise that they have been taught to solve planning problems on their own” (Machler et al, 2015). Margo Huxley critiques communicative planning, by questioning if it is possible for “the planning system and planning practitioners” to separate themselves from the systems of capitalism and oppression in which their work operates (2000, p. 376). This critique begs the question if community knowledge can be legitimized if neoliberal and capitalistic agendas have the final say and control over planning, and communicative planning is still prompted and led by “official” planners. If planning remains an arm of the

state, and the state maintains ideologies that counter community needs, then can communicative planning claim that community knowledge is legitimized?

Insurgent

Oren Yiftachel was an earlier theorist to point out the harm urban planning can cause. In "Planning and Social Control: Exploring the Dark Side" he argues, "the modern state often advances the interests of social elites and dominant groups at the expense of weaker groups. Therefore, and contrary to conventional wisdom, urban and regional planning is not just an arm of government that may or may not contribute to societal progress and reform; it is also embedded in a structure that often oppresses subordinate groups. Social control can occur in a variety of ways, some that are totally benign. It can also be a useful instrument for the preservation of public rule and order. However, the evident link between urban and regional planning and the dark side of minority, gender, and peripheral group oppression has rarely been aired in the planning discourse, let alone properly theorized" (403). This claim is later theorized more extensively within the theory of insurgent planning.

Insurgent planning recognizes and gives power to de facto and uncategorized acts of citizens that constitute modern planning (Miraftab, 2009). Faranak Miraftab, a central scholar within insurgent planning, argues that "radical planning practices should be insurgent. To promote social transformation, insurgent planning has to disrupt the attempts of neoliberal governance to stabilize oppressive relationships through inclusion. Insurgent planning, then, constitutes radical planning practices that challenge the inequitable specifics of neoliberal

governance operating through inclusion. Insurgent planning should read through the bluff of neoliberal governance's promise of inclusive citizenship." Miraftab highlights the importance of insurgent planning to combat neoliberal and government-led attempts at inclusion that aim to stabilize oppression rather than make systematic changes.

In congruence with Thorpe, insurgent planning thought leaders argue that every-day acts of marginalized community members, creating urban and social infrastructure, are the key to finding democracy in planning systems that are often overshadowed by neoliberal power structures (Miraftab, 2009). It is simply not enough to have planning actors citing participation and inclusion while working on behalf of the neoliberal state; community knowledge must be legitimized beyond the state. In a speech to the World Congress of Planning Schools in 2016, Miraftab says that insurgent activists "claim it is not enough to address individualized rights and fair treatment as liberal political philosophy of justice advocates. Rather, they call for urgent recognition of self-determined and group-based forms of oppression. Such an understanding of justice shifts the debate on inclusion from representation to self-determination —a shift in perspective that validates citizens' collective direct action and shifts from representative democracy to participatory democracy" (pg 4). Insurgent planning is the main planning theory that considers community knowledge legitimate and extends that legitimacy to call community members planners in their own right.

Popular education tools used to mobilize around planning related issues are often not created by formal planning professionals, they are tools of necessity because planning is technically complicated and a root of systematic power. These

tools exist in the informal planning participation realm Thorpe legitimizes within her research.

Popular Education

A guide to popular education written in 1985 states, “popular education may be new as a term, but the idea is not new: that education can serve the interests of the poor and oppressed sectors; that developing a critical consciousness is part of organizing for change; that people themselves can define their own content and create their own forms of education; that learning can be participatory, fun, and mobilizing” (Arnold et al, p 5). Paulo Freire, famed Brazilian educator, first wrote about popular education in his book “Pedagogy of the Oppressed” in 1968. Freire is known for criticizing the “banking” approach to education, arguing that students should be taught in a way that gives them agency, respects their lived experience and existing knowledge, and makes way for “deepened consciousness of their situation” (Freire, p 85). “Freire’s pedagogy is directed toward creating a nonviolent revolution through adult education. At its most basic level, it focuses on a process of conscientization through which the oppressed come to understand the cultural forces that produce and maintain oppression” (Beder, p 73).

While popular education is a growing tool used within planning policy work, very little research looks at the combination of planning theory and popular education theory in practice. Bengle and Sorenson conducted a study in 2016 which is the closest. Their research, titled “Integrating Popular Education into a Model of Empowerment Planning,” looked at the outcomes of using popular education methodology within a neighborhood planning process in a low-income community in

Charlotte, NC. The study looks specifically at the experiences and outcomes of a two-day workshop that took place with community members. "Centering popular education in empowerment planning can help develop citizens' understanding of structural inequality so that solutions originate from the community's own inclusive vision and are not focused on symptoms or horizontal hostility. To shift the dialog toward explicit naming of structural inequality and the power systems that maintain inequality, popular education should be continuously integrated into empowerment planning" (pg. 335). The study found that popular education was a successful tool to encourage communities to think about structural problems within planning.

This research hopes to focus on the educational process and design of tools that are using popular education to address unequal power relationships and complicated urban regulations related to urban planning. The legacy of participatory planning theory is critical when looking forward to how planners can utilize these tools for truly transformative outcomes that center bottom-up insurgent models of planning.

Case Study:

Vendor Power Guide

The Center for Urban Pedagogy is a nonprofit organization that utilizes design and art to create educational tools meant to increase civic engagement (CUP website). Founded in 1997 by Rosten Woo and Damon Rich, "CUP collaborates with designers, educators, advocates, students, and communities to make educational tools that demystify complex policy and planning issues" (CUP website). As a mission statement, CUP states: "We believe that increasing understanding of how

these systems work is the first step to better, more equitable, and more diverse community participation” (CUP website).

As executive director of CUP, Rosten Woo founded Making Policy Public (MPP), a quarterly series of illustrated guides to public policy (Woo’s website). When writing about her experience participating, designer Candy Change writes, [MPP is] “a series of fold-out posters that use graphic design to explore and explain public policy. Each poster is the product of a commissioned collaboration between a designer and an advocate. This series aims to make information on public policy truly public: accessible, meaningful, and shared” (2009). On his website, Woo writes “Each year, a jury of artists, graphic designers, grassroots advocates, and public policy experts convenes to choose a slate of issues and collaborators. CUP works with the selected designers and advocates to produce a print publication that folds out into a poster. Half of the print run is distributed for free through grassroots channels, the other half is sold at art and design bookstores to recoup costs.”

Pushcart peddlers were first regulated in New York City in 1691 (SVP, 2006). Vending has been seen as an ideal entry level job for new immigrants to the city for centuries in New York, and while vendors have faced consistent oppression and discriminatory regulations, a 2006 report claims, “wave after wave of immigrants and entrepreneurs used vending as a stepping-stone to financial security” (SVP, 2006). Vendors in New York City represent an extremely diverse group of entrepreneurs, and have consistently been the recipients of xenophobic, classist, misinformed intolerance at the hands of community perception, enforcement, and government regulations (SVP, 2006).

The Street Vendor Project, known colloquially as a union for New York street vendors, was founded in 2001 (SVP Facebook). A part of the Urban Justice Center in New York City, “The Street Vendor Project works to correct the social and economic injustice faced by [vendors]. Reaching out to vendors on the street, [they] hold clinics to educate vendors about their legal rights, organize vendors to participate in the political process that determines their fate, [and] engage in systemic advocacy to help policy makers and the public understand the important role street vendors play in the life of [New York City]” (SVP Facebook).

In the Winter of 2009, Rosten Woo and John Mangin from CUP paired Sean Basinski from the Street Vendor Project, and designer and artist Candy Chang to create an MPP poster to “to demystify the rules and regulations of street vending in New York City” (Chang, 2009). Together, the team created the Vendor Power Guide.

Figure 2. Sean Basinski, Rosten Woo, John Mangin, and Candy Chang.



(Chang, 2009)

The team tasked with creating the fold-out poster worked together for five months, ultimately translating NYC's vending regulations into an accessible tool that served as an "educational resource for vendors and as an advocacy tool that highlighted the history of vending, personal vendor stories and policy reforms to help develop a more just system" (Chang, 2009).

While creators of the Vendor Power Guide refer to it as an example of popular education, the guide has been cited as an example of information design and visual law. The guide is a case study found in "Making Sense of Field Research: A Practical Guide for Information Designers" written by Sheila Pontis. Pontis describes the design process, citing the blog article Candy Chang published on Urban Omnibus in 2009. The guide is also cited as an example of visual law work in "Visual Law: What Lawyers Need to Learn from Visual Information Designers" published by Cornell University School of Law. The guide shows up as a case study in "Knowledge Visualization Current: From Text to Art to Culture," which calls it a "convincing example of visualizing the law." Those involved with creating the guide were not interviewed or questioned in any of these publications or articles.

Methodology:

Overview

This research is a case study of the Vendor Power Guide. To conduct this research, I utilized qualitative research methods relying on interviews with seeds who have particularly privileged accounts of the Vendor Power Guide and street vending education in two California cities. These interviews were conducted with known informants and also relied on "snowball sampling" to ensure representation

from multiple groups of people were included in interviews. I also reference and rely on personal experiences with the process of creating visual tools for vendors in Los Angeles and organizing for fair street vending laws with the Los Angeles Street Vendor Campaign.

While written as a singular case study, this research utilizes more limited supplementary cases of vendor guides in Los Angeles and Santa Monica. I utilize Vinit Mukhija's methodology of "N of One Plus Some," focusing on the Vendor Power Guide, but recognizing that understanding how other cities have dealt with vendor visual tools can make the analysis of the Vendor Power Guide more effective and insightful (2010).

Research Approach

Sociologist Michael Burawoy has called a more engaged research a "reflexive model of science," premised on engagement and "our own participation in the world we study" ("Extended case method," 1998). This research is not aiming to be objective or have neutral analysis. I have been engaged in work related to street vendors for many years and have working relationships with some of the informants that were interviewed. In addition, I am guided by the work of people like Faranak Miraftab, for whom the planning process is no longer regarded as neutral. This research is also guided by Friedman's argument that planning needs to have utopian thinking (2000). This research proposes what planning ought to be, rather than only focusing on what is.

Semi-structured In-Depth Interviews

A total of eleven in depth interviews with vendors and informants were conducted. Additionally, approximately fifteen informal interviews were conducted with street vendors in New York City. Informal interviews lasted between ten minutes and thirty-five minutes. In-depth interviews lasted between forty-five minutes and two hours, depending on the length of informant responses and additional questions that were brought up. All in-depth interview subjects signed consent forms, determining if recording was okay, and how or if I could use their name or quotes within this paper. Eight out of the eleven interviews were conducted in person, and the rest were conducted by zoom or phone due to Covid-19.

I crafted interview questions and wrote the research proposal for this thesis based on experience organizing with the campaign to legalize street vending in Los Angeles from 2016-2018. Something that is notable about the organizing for street vendor rights in Los Angeles is that while trained planners are playing vital roles within the campaign, street vendor knowledge and experience is always the expertise used to advocate for policy change. In my experience, planners and lawyers were often used to navigate formal systems of politics and law enforcement, but vendors controlled the narrative of campaign communication, advocacy work, action, or larger political fights.

Vending Visual Guides

The Vendor Power Guide was the first, but not the only visual tool created around vendor rules and regulations. To complement interview comments on these

other tools, I coded written and visual content in the other guides created by the health department in New York, Bureau of Street Services in Los Angeles, and City of Santa Monica. The New York health department guide was selected after being brought up in interviews, and the other guides were selected because of their existence and accessible information or connection to Rosten Woo.

Analysis

Interview data was coded, using repetition of topics and concerns that varied informants mentioned and noted in their responses. This coding process and analysis is highlighted by the different sections of the findings section. Content analysis of coded interviews is used to answer research questions and led to the policy suggestions stated at the end of the paper.

Limitations and Covid-19

This paper was limited by the impacts of Covid-19. Street vendors in New York and Los Angeles are some of the most vulnerable front-line workers, and have suffered extreme economic hardship, been targeted with tickets and police harassment, and like many others face health and eviction concerns. There were limited opportunities for follow up questions and extended research or interviews as a result of Covid-19. While Covid-19 created unique circumstances that limited opportunities for continued research, it also became relevant when thinking about future concerns vendors face, and the need for clear and informative communication about rules and regulations more broadly.

Findings:

The word “magic” was used a surprising amount when talking to the people involved with the creation of the Vendor Power Guide. It was perhaps this same magic that made the guide such an interesting case study. While I knew Rosten Woo was still involved with similar work, I was worried that people might not remember working on the Vendor Power Guide or have anything to share with me. This worry was quickly put to rest; the impact of not only the guide but the experience of teamwork and creativity during its creation eleven years ago seemed to be rooted in the minds and hearts of those involved with the project. Similarly, countless vendors working the streets of New York City in 2020 smiled wide and expressed familiarity with the guide when asked, many sharing stories about its direct impact on their working lives. The Vendor Power Guide created a splash in the design and vending worlds of New York City in 2009 and has since impacted vendors and systems thinking about vendor education around the country and even the world.

Themes of Successful Popular Education:

When conducting interviews, coding interview transcripts, and conducting analysis of documents a number of themes and priorities emerged, and the remainder of the Findings section is organized around these themes and priorities. First, in keeping with my experience in Los Angeles, a consensus that vendors should be and are the experts was persistent. A strong ideology of *insurgent planning theory* is seen throughout the design of the vendor power guide and continues into stories and experiences vendors shared with me. More often than

not, street vendors in New York shared that they knew the laws better than enforcement officers. The role of insurgency related to the Vendor Power Guide is thus a first category of findings, linking the theory of insurgency with the guide specifically.

In addition to the theory behind the tool, the *design* of a popular education tool matters as well. This research aims to understand how popular education tools can be a potential tool for tackling complex urban regulations and unequal power relationships, and the case focused on, the Vendor Power Guide, is a highly designed tool. I asked questions of those involved with the creation of the Vendor Power Guide about the final design, and Candy Chang has an extensive blog about her experience designing the guide which acted as a supplementary resource since she was not available to be interviewed. The design choices made during the creation process reflect the priorities of the stakeholders, and the continued relevance of those priorities for New York street vendors are part of why the guide is still useful today. I focus on the design choices for the guide in this section, but they have a clear connection to vendor experience that is highlighted through the impact and outcomes section later on in findings.

While the design section focused on design choices, the *process* by which the Vendor Power Guide was created is also relevant and emerged prominently in interviews with stakeholders. Throughout all of the interviews conducted with non-vendor stakeholders for this research, the creation process and motivation behind the creation of tools were emphasized and claimed as important. Tools like the Vendor Power Guide don't just appear; a lot of intention and collaboration of skills and knowledge go into their creation. This section aims to highlight what process

was followed during the creation of the Vendor Power Guide, and why that process matters. Process is also a theme that was critical to the interviews regarding education tools in Los Angeles and Santa Monica, further highlighting the importance of process in either creating tools that have positive outcomes, or ones that potentially even cause harm.

The Role of Insurgency

Many who take a traditional approach to planning definitions may not even call the Vendor Power Guide an urban planning tool. While the tool gives concrete explanations of zoning rules and regulations street vendors face in New York City, it was not created by trained urban planners. But it is still a critical and important tool for urban planners to learn from and bring back to their work. In 2009 Miraftab wrote:

Insurgent planning recognizes, supports and promotes not only the coping mechanisms of the grassroots exercised in invited spaces of citizenship, but also the oppositional practices of the grassroots as they innovate their own terms of engagement. Skeptics may ask if insurgent planning is not a contradiction in terms. In pursuing the notion, I note that the discussion of insurgent planning is framed in terms of its relevance for “planning,” not for “the planner.” It refers to a set of practices, not to a specific type of actor (insurgent planner). The focus is on a value-based definition of practices we can recognize as insurgent. (17-18)

The Vendor Power Guide operates within these notions of invited and oppositional spaces, acting as an example of insurgent planning. Not only has the guide had practical and tangible impacts on the street for vendors, it has also created broader legal and social impacts that hint to the far-reaching power of insurgent planning for oppositional grassroots movements. Interviews with vendors and vendor advocates made it clear that the Vendor Power Guide helps vendors navigate formal

systems, like dealing with police harassment or ticketing, while highlighting the Street Vendor Project's view of existing regulations for vendors that the organization views as unjust and outdated. The outcome of the guide is not accidentally insurgent, it is the result of intentional design, process, and community actors that were in-tune with the experience and challenge of vending in New York City. While the Vendor Power Guide perhaps did not get created under the guise of a theory of insurgent urban planning, if planners are choosing to create popular education tools there must be a recognition that a planning theory exists that addresses the importance of following many of the same choices that made the Vendor Power Guide a successful tool. If planners hope to implement popular education tools within their work that are useful for community members and conscious of real-life experiences, models of insurgent planning must be at the fore of their intention and thinking.

Design of the Vendor Power Guide

The Vendor Power Guide is a fold out pamphlet that has a friendly Ikea-manual design approach, while using a bold yellow black and white color scheme. Designer, Candy Chang, says "I eventually landed on a friendly Chris Ware-inspired style and had good times illustrating everything from hot dog stands to former Mayor Ed Koch" (2009).

Designed for print, the guide has two components: one side is strictly designed for vendors while the other side folds out into a poster and is meant for allies and community supporters of vendors, something Woo told me aimed to

“convert a street vendor fan into a street vendor advocate.”¹ The pamphlet and poster design gives the guide what Woo calls “two personalities.”² “On one hand, “it's a thing that you use out in the street, like you use it in an interaction with a police officer or you use it, you know, talking to a brick and mortar store owner. And it's got the information and it's immediate. You just open it up and there's the information. But then, it opens up into this poster that is obviously totally impractical for a street vendor to, like, walk around with on the street.”³ John Mangin, who worked at CUP in 2009 as a legal fellow, added: “aspects of the foldout poster were inward focused and the poster itself was more public focused. And that really became a model for some of the other [CUP] projects as well, because it worked so well.”⁴ Collectively, the guide is full of information and carries a narrative that is unequivocally pro-vendor.

The portion of the guide intended for street vendors is split into two simple sections. The first, “Know Your Rights” gives four clear instructions for vendors when they are being ticketed by police. Each section has an illustration that can be understood by those without literacy ability, and accompanied by the following explanations translated into five languages (English, Bengali, Chinese, Arabic, and Spanish):

1. Take a photo of video of your spot. You can use these in court.
2. Get names and badge numbers of the police.
3. File a complaint if the police abuse your rights or are disrespectful.

¹ R. Woo, personal communication, February 10, 2020.

² R. Woo, personal communication, February 10, 2020.

³ R. Woo, personal communication, February 10, 2020.

⁴ J. Mangin, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

4. Show up in court. If you don't, you'll be fined more.

The section also has information on interacting with store owners and security guards, and when police can legally ask vendors to move.

Figure 3. Vendor Power Guide Know Your Rights.

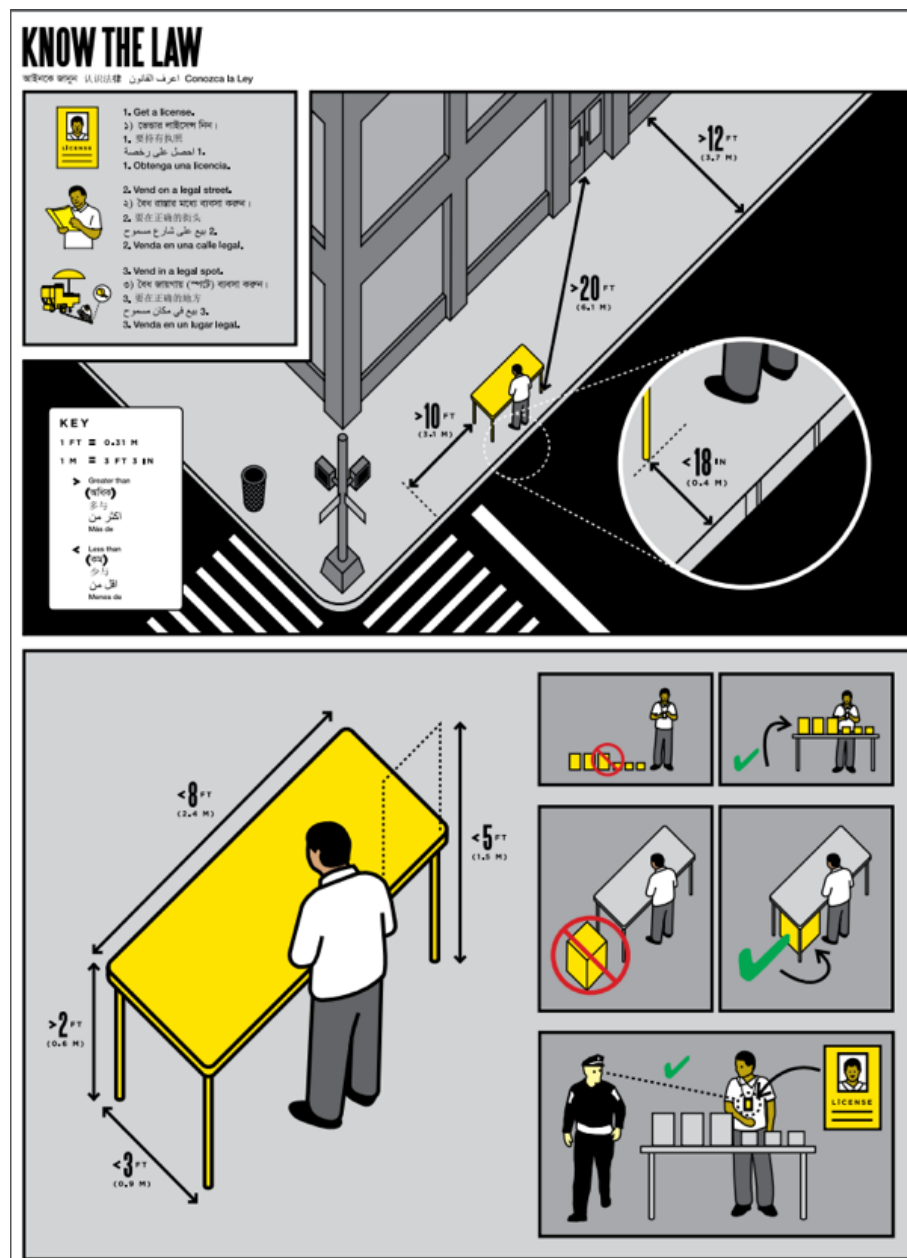


(Center for Urban Pedagogy, 2009)

The second section for vendors is called “Know The Law” and walks a vendor through the most basic laws around vending in New York City almost entirely with illustrations. It includes specific measures and rules for vending in relation to physical aspects of the sidewalk and vendors’ surroundings. Sean Basinski, the former executive director of the Street Vendor Project and a lawyer, says that the

guide was created to address and help vendors navigate the most pressing concerns and harassment they face in New York while vending.⁵

Figure 4. Vendor Power Guide Know the Law.



(Center for Urban Pedagogy, 2009)

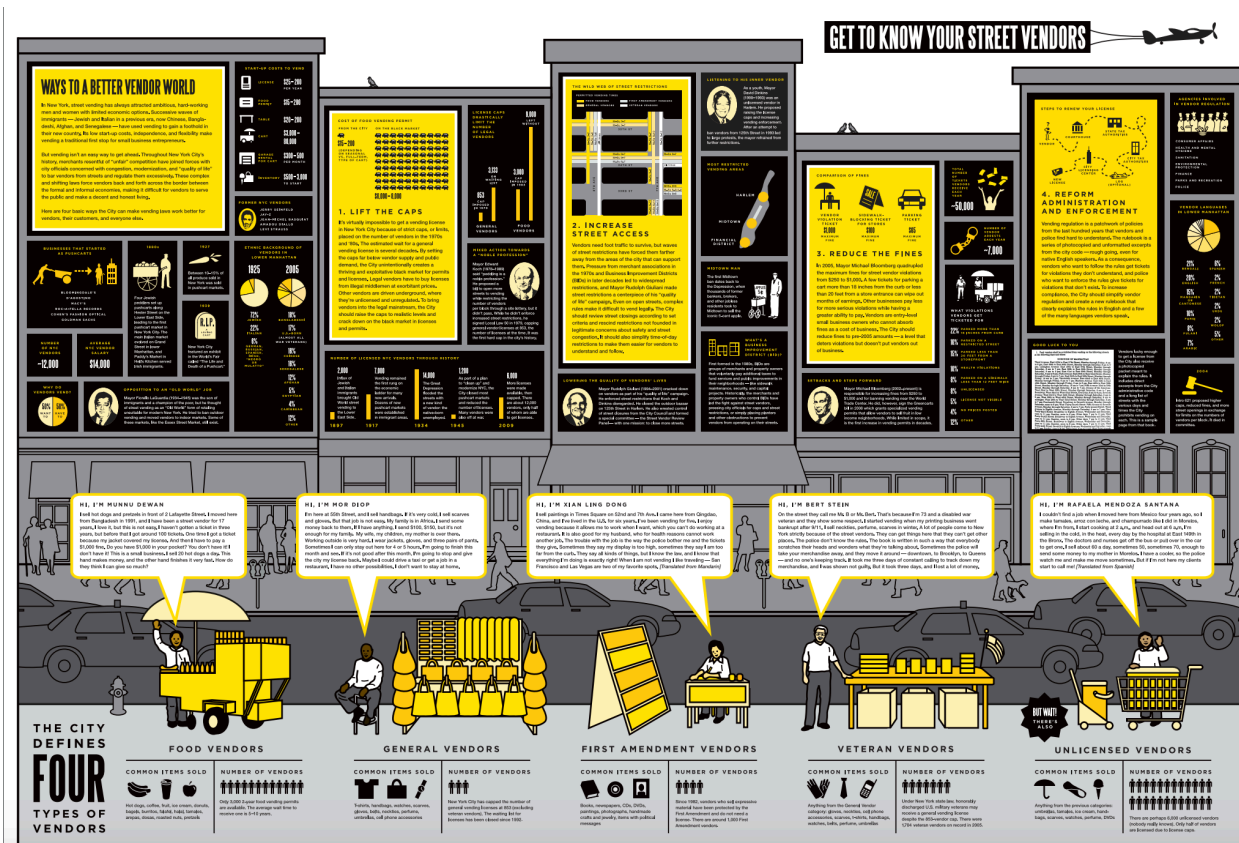
⁵ S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

The poster side of the pamphlet is titled "Get To Know Your Street Vendors."

Written by Mangin, the poster includes historical information about vending in New York, highlights the life of different kinds of vendors working in New York, and most importantly lists four "Ways To A Better Vendor World:"

1. Lift the Caps
2. Increase Street Access
3. Reduce the Fines
4. Reform Administration and Enforcement

Figure 5. Vendor Power Guide Know Your Street Vendors.



(Center for Urban Pedagogy, 2009)

These two different audiences and sections of the guide fit almost perfectly within Miraftab's framework of insurgent planning. The first section for vendors is designed and acts as a tool for vendors to use when navigating formal systems, such as dealing with police officers and preparing for court. The side for allies is meant to garner movement support and oppose unfair rules, regulations, and treatment, acting as the "oppositional" component to insurgency. There is nothing neutral or unbiased about the guide. While it aims to help vendors navigate existing laws, it has a clear narrative which supports the mission of SVP advocacy and opposes the anti-vendor rules and regulations in New York City.

Basinski communicated how important the Vendor Power Guide was to SVP. "Nonprofits need designed help and need organizations like CUP bringing designers and advocacy nonprofits together. When it happens It can produce phenomenal returns. The return on that [minimal time] investment [for SVP] was enormous."⁶ Basinski described to me how SVP used the Vendor Power Guide as a handout in meetings with officials and as a way to highlight the work they do with vendors in NYC.⁷ Basinski says before the Vendor Power Guide, SVP struggled with their outreach materials. "It happens a lot, there's some meeting with some, often city-council, person and you rush to put together a folder, you get a folder, and then ask yourself what the hell's going to go in the folder? And, you know, like you just haven't had time to, like, make the nice color printing of the nice article that you got and the flyers that you gave out. So it looks like crap. The grab-ability, that's the power of the Vendor Power Guide. It's so valuable."⁸ The Vendor Power Guide

⁶ S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

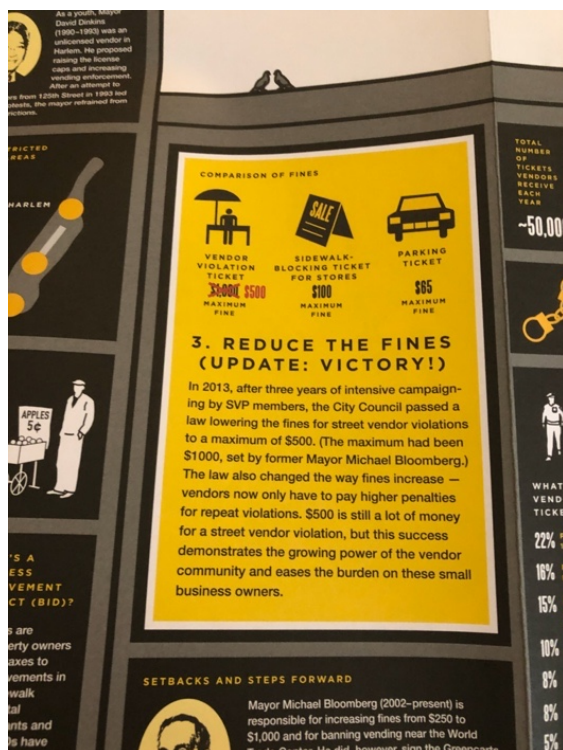
⁷ S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

⁸ S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

became a part of the messaging and outreach work of SVP, helping to spread information about the unjust regulations for street vending in New York City.

After years of organizing, the Street Vendor Project succeeded in getting city council to reduce the maximum dollar amount for vendor fines from \$1000 to \$500 in 2013. CUP re-printed the guide to highlight this success, despite not working directly with SVP since 2009.⁹ Updated guides are available for purchase in 2020 on the CUP website and in their Gowanus Brooklyn office.¹⁰

Figure 6. Vendor Power Guide Victory Update.



(Center for Urban Pedagogy, 2013)

⁹ CUP staff, personal communication, February 21, 2020.

¹⁰ CUP staff, personal communication, February 21, 2020.

Process

The Vendor Power Guide marked an important shift in the early years of CUP. Rosten Woo, cofounder and acting executive director of CUP in 2009, shared that the Vendor Power Guide was one of the earliest projects the organization worked on, and belonged in CUP's Making Policy Public Series¹¹. Making Policy Public was an important moment for the organization, marking a shift to more formal system thinking instead of one-off ideas that Woo says usually started with "wouldn't it be cool if...".¹² Woo notes that CUP creating a series wasn't a "historical moment" but rather seemed like the obvious thing to do once they created the formula for Making Policy Public.¹³ "I think it just felt like it was at the right moment organizationally for CUP. There's an infinite number of things that are unnecessarily confusing. And also like a huge number of really talented designers. So it sort of seems like it seemed obvious, like, once we had the format [for MPP] it could run forever."¹⁴ CUP sent out an open call for applicants and created juries to select participants in order to give the process legitimacy.¹⁵ They were seeking both designers and organizations with need for a visual tool about a policy issue.¹⁶ Designers were asked to send a portfolio and ten slides showing a vision for the project.¹⁷ Juries then chose the policy topic and designer for the Making Policy

¹¹ R. Woo, personal communication, February 10, 2020.

¹² R. Woo, personal communication, February 10, 2020.

¹³ R. Woo, personal communication, February 10, 2020.

¹⁴ R. Woo, personal communication, February 10, 2020.

¹⁵ R. Woo, personal communication, February 10, 2020.

¹⁶ R. Woo, personal communication, February 10, 2020.

¹⁷ R. Woo, personal communication, February 10, 2020.

Public project.¹⁸ CUP uses this same system today, making numerous MPP projects each year.¹⁹

Basinski says he was encouraged to apply, having had a previous relationship with Woo and others at CUP.²⁰ He enthusiastically shared that it was an amazing opportunity, and one that was needed by SVP because of the challenges facing vendors.²¹ The juries chose designer Candy Chang and SVP to collaborate in making the Vendor Power Guide in the Winter of 2009. Once the pairing was determined, the design process began. CUP acted as the funder and project manager throughout the process, allowing for SVP and Candy Chang to focus on their unique roles of determining content and creating graphics.²² John Mangin and Rosten Woo were the main CUP employees involved with the project and acted as project managers²³

When beginning the creation process all involved described a “teach in” meeting. The teach-in model allowed Chang and CUP employees to hear from SVP and understand what street vendors were combatting on the streets of NYC. Mangin adds, “Yeah, I remember the first part of the project was sort of a teach-in by Sean Basinski from the Street Vendor Project, where Roston and I and Candy Chang, the designer, sat with [Basinski] as he explained to us the legal and regulatory context and, you know, perhaps also the social context that we would be stepping into when working on this project. And so my first role, which felt very familiar from my work at pro se litigation, was to try to boil all this down and explain it in as clear

¹⁸ R. Woo, personal communication, February 10, 2020.

¹⁹ CUP Staff, personal communication, February 21, 2020.

²⁰ S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

²¹ S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

²² R. Woo, personal communication, February 10, 2020.

²³ R. Woo, personal communication, February 10, 2020.

and straightforward a way as possible.”²⁴ Active vendors and SVP membership were involved with content editing later in the process, but Basinski says his working knowledge from giving legal counsel to vendors acted as the starting point for content creation.²⁵ Candy Chang describes speaking with vendors in numerous occasions while in the early stages of designing the guide (2009). The guide went through numerous passes with working vendors at SVP meetings to ensure that its content would be useful and applicable to their work.²⁶ The involvement of vendors and vending advocates within the creation of the guide fulfills popular education models of lifting up lived experience and using education as a tool for liberation. The membership model of SVP seemed to lend itself to vendor involvement in the guide’s creation.

Woo argues that the project is an example of popular education, rather than a different approach to data visualization. “The goal of the project [was] to make knowledge more democratic and intelligible.”²⁷ Basinski echoes this point when discussing the goals SVP had when creating the guide, stating that there had been previous hand drawn attempts to describe laws to vendors because the legal jargon is so complex and challenging to understand, in addition to being distributed in English.²⁸ In an article written about creating Vendor Power, Candy Change writes, “Our goal was to make an educational resource for vendors that clarifies the rules and their rights when confronted by police officers. We also wanted the poster to serve as an advocacy tool that highlights the history of vending, personal vendor

²⁴ J. Mangin, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

²⁵ S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

²⁶ J. Mangin, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

²⁷ R. Woo, personal communication, April 9, 2020.

²⁸ S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

stories, and policy reforms to help develop a more just system” (2009). Mangin adds “People need to be able to understand the processes that affect them.”²⁹

Mohamed Attia, current Executive Director of SVP and former street vendor in New York City, echoes why this was so needed from his own experiences as a vendor.

When I first got [the Vendor Power Guide] it was super helpful. I mean as a vendor, as an average vendor, it’s super hard and complicated to understand the rules and regulations that govern vending. When we apply for a food vendor license they give out this large booklet of a hundred pages or so with all of these rules and regulations that are very complicated and I found it to be very hard to understand, but also when it comes to the real life, what [the regulations] mean in the real life, that’s even harder. So, yeah, the Vendor Power [Guide] explains some basic rules that applies for anyone, applies for all kinds of vendors, so that was really helpful for me to understand. And as of today, for our work at the Street Vendor Project it helps us a lot because when we go out and we talk to vendors, a lot of vendors don’t have an idea about all the rules and regulations. They know a little bit of them, but not all of them, and that also hurts them sometimes and their businesses because sometimes they’ll be working in a place where it’s legal and where they are following the rules and regulations and police officers will come and say ‘you can’t be here you have to leave.’ So unless the vendor really understands what their rights are and what their responsibilities are it’s very hard to argue and challenge the police officers when they come and do that. So that [guide] just helps us a lot when we go out and reach out to vendors. We give them that [guide] and we explain to them this very long booklet they receive from the department of consumer affairs, what that means in the real life. So that’s how helpful it is.³⁰

Mohamed says that in his experience “most vendors learn from the [guide].”³¹

Outcomes and Impact:

Using the Vendor Power Guide as a case allowed for a unique opportunity to follow a popular education tool over a long period of time. While its longevity of use perhaps speaks for itself, the outcomes and impacts of the guide, particularly on New York street vendors, were critical to understanding the broader role of popular

²⁹ J. Mangin, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

³⁰ M. Attia, personal communication, February 18, 2020.

³¹ M. Attia, personal communication, February 18, 2020.

education tools in dealing with complex urban regulations and understanding how they may impact unequal power relationships. Street vendor experiences were critical to understanding what the impact of the Vendor Power Guide has been. Additionally, the creation of guides that mimic aspects of the Vendor Power Guide by formal government agencies is an interesting impact that was brought up during interviews with stakeholders.

Eleven years after its creation, the Vendor Power Guide is still making a difference for street vendors in New York City. While the fines have been lowered by \$500, the other advocacy concerns included in the guide persist.³² Vendors shared that ticketing and fines have decreased with the removal of Bloomberg from office, however, almost all of the vendors that spoke about the guide shared recent experiences dealing with police or receiving tickets. One vendor that sold candied nuts near the SVP office shared that the police don't know the laws and she used the guide to explain why the ticket they were trying to give her was incorrect; they were claiming she was too close to a crosswalk but measuring from an incorrect location. The guide's clear illustrations helped her make a case against the ticket with the officers. A hot dog vendor that was interviewed shared his experiences of getting a ticket the day before, and despite being familiar with the guide, didn't follow the guide's steps for dealing with police and will have to go to court without the proof he needs to argue that the officers once again measured to the incorrect place, confusing the awning of the nearby building with the physical door.³³ He didn't seem to be too bothered by receiving the ticket, but acknowledged that the

³² M. Attia, personal communication, February 18, 2020.

³³ Street Vendor, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

steps outlined by the guide could have helped him rebut the ill-conceived summons.³⁴

The Street Vendor Project is still extremely active in New York City, and the Vendor Power Guide has become a calling card, of sorts, for the organization amongst vendors. When I approached a group of male falafel vendors about the guide, not all of them were familiar with the actual guide, but the collective group shared that they knew about SVP and knew that the guide was connected to SVP's work. Basinski was present for these interactions and stated that the guide had become synonymous with SVP and their work almost like a "business card."³⁵

A street vendor that works in Times Square selling art, and has worked closely with SVP over the years, shared that she tells any new vendors to join SVP and educate themselves on the rules and regulations.³⁶ She seems to be a vendor leader in Times Square, and helped with some of the translation work for the Vendor Power Guide.³⁷ She says, "today everyone knows the Vendor Power Guide. It's so easy. The city, the judge, everybody knows it. The New York City government should be making something like this for everyone, but, anyway, we did it and I was so proud. This is something that will be used forever. It doesn't matter the language someone speaks, it will be helpful."³⁸ She echoed that often police will be confused and try to give tickets to vendors for things that are legal, and that her knowledge of the rules and the guide have helped her navigate these situations.³⁹ When asked if she has used the guide herself, she told me, "all the

³⁴ Street Vendor, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

³⁵ S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

³⁶ Street Vendor Leader, personal communication, February 23, 2020.

³⁷ Street Vendor Leader, personal communication, February 23, 2020.

³⁸ Street Vendor Leader, personal communication, February 23, 2020.

³⁹ Street Vendor Leader, personal communication, February 23, 2020.

time, especially to show to police right here, we are always fighting and we show them [the guide].”⁴⁰ She has been vending for seventeen years, and says “We had a lot of hard times [with police] years ago, but now everybody knows each other. Things are way better.”⁴¹ While this vendor was one of many who shared with me that ticketing has gone down after Bloomberg left office, many also shared that police still don’t understand the laws, and ticketing of street vendors still happens in New York City.

Attia shared that the guide is used daily by SVP organizers and the SVP office keeps boxes of the guide printed for vendors and their members still in 2020, making it clear that the guide has withstood the test of time.⁴² While no vendors I approached on the street had the guide with them at the time, many mentioned having it at home. Attia told me that “Some [vendors] just love this [guide] so much and they keep it with them, and they keep it on their carts. I remember one day I was walking in Queens and I found the [guide] like wide open. It was on a cart. I said, oh, wow, that’s very interesting that someone is so proud of this Vendor Power [Guide], showing to the police that [they] know [their] rights and are following the rules. That was interesting. Yeah, most vendors we meet actually learn from [the guide]. I mean, even like people who have been vending for many years, they don’t know their basic rights.”⁴³

For Mangin, now a lawyer at the NYC Planning Department, this means the guide was a success. When asked if he saw the guide as a successful project, he

⁴⁰ Street Vendor Leader, personal communication, February 23, 2020.

⁴¹ Street Vendor Leader, personal communication, February 23, 2020.

⁴² M. Attia, personal communication, February 18, 2020.

⁴³ M. Attia, personal communication, February 18, 2020.

noted that sometimes design projects can have good intentions but “don’t necessarily do what they are trying to do.”⁴⁴ He said he’s asked himself “was it just a piece of art or was it an actual tool that helped people who needed it?”⁴⁵ The response from vendors in 2020 seem to suggest it is a tool that has and continues to help vendors.

While the impact the guide has had on vendors is of course most critical, the guide has also received recognition for its design. In 2010, the guide was featured in the National Design Triennial at the Smithsonian Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum (Candy Chang website).

Currently, SVP and CUP seem to be the only organizations with printed versions of the guide that are distributing it to vendors and community members. CUP sells the guide in their office,⁴⁶ while SVP actively gives working vendors the guide.⁴⁷ Previously, the Center for Court Innovation contacted SVP about distributing the guide during their vendor advocacy work.⁴⁸ Attia was given the guide while attending a court-ordered “responsible vending class” after going to court for tickets.⁴⁹ The court no longer focuses on street vending⁵⁰ and did not seem familiar with the guide when I contacted them by phone.

While the Vendor Power Guide has limited distribution points throughout the city in 2020, Basinski mentioned that it has “almost been replaced with a newer and better thing” for mobile food vendors created by the NYC Department of

⁴⁴ J. Mangin, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

⁴⁵ J. Mangin, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

⁴⁶ CUP staff, personal communication, February 21, 2020.

⁴⁷ M. Attia, personal communication, February 18, 2020.

⁴⁸ S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

⁴⁹ M. Attia, personal communication, February 18, 2020.

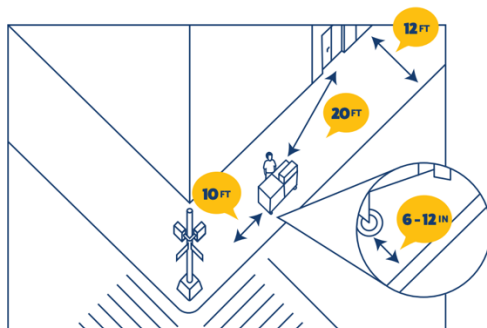
⁵⁰ S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

Health.⁵¹ What Mobile Food Vendors Should Know is a thirty-six page document that explains the rules and regulations for mobile food vendors in New York City. It mimics some of the same graphic models as the Vendor Power Guide, with friendly illustrations, and is offered on the Department of Health website in at least nine languages. While less accessible for vendors lacking literacy ability, the guide is much more in-depth for food vendors than the Vendor Power Guide and is accompanied by a guide to explain letter grading for vendors as well as a food safety video (NYC Department of Health). The health department guide lacks an advocacy component, choosing to instead focus on rules and regulations, marking a notable difference between it and the Vendor Power Guide.

Figure 7 & 8. NYC Department of Health Where to Set Up Your Mobile Food Vending Unit.

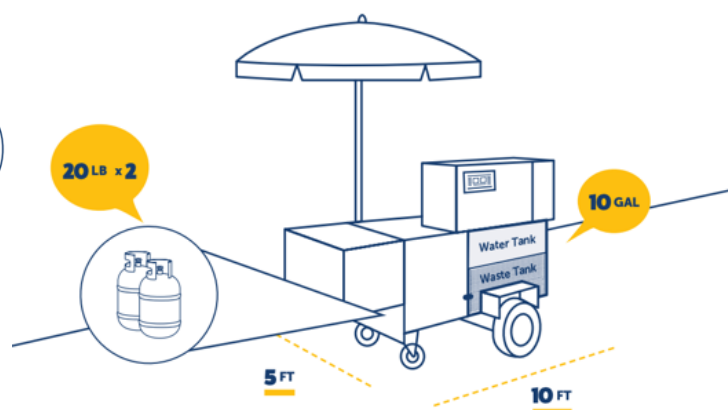
WHERE TO SET UP YOUR MOBILE FOOD VENDING UNIT:

Pushcarts:



- Set up your pushcart on a sidewalk that is **at least 12 feet wide**.
- Set up your unit within **6-12 inches** of the curb.
- Set up your unit at least **10 feet** from any crosswalk, driveway or subway entrance/exit.
- Your unit must be at least **20 feet** from a building's entrance or exit.
- Your unit may not be in a bus stop or hospital "No Standing" zone.

Mobile food vending units, including sidewalk trailers and pushcarts, **may not be larger than 5 feet wide and 10 feet long (5'X 10')**. This includes all pushcart attachments and overhead structures.



(NYC Department of Health Vendor Guide)

⁵¹ S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

In addition to the Department of Health, the New York Police Department reached out to SVP about collaborating on a visual guide the “cops would respect” that would have the NYPD logo on it.⁵² Basinski shared that a lawyer with SVP had told him that the guide had been created without the help of SVP,⁵³ but no sign of a NYPD vendor guide can be found online. Basinski says the new guide represents the “pressure” the Vendor Power Guide put on the city, stating the guide highlighted what the city was “lacking” in terms of vendor education.⁵⁴ “Vendor Power showed the city what they should be doing and imitation is the best form of flattery.”⁵⁵

When asked if the Vendor Power Guide worked as planned, Basinski replied enthusiastically.⁵⁶ It has had a longer life than he would have suspected, and has been received well in the non-vendor world in addition to “getting the job done” for vendors.⁵⁷ He says that city council staffers “thought [the guide] was great” and that all in all, the Vendor Power Guide has “some magic.”⁵⁸ Additionally, Basinski shared with me that the guide has made it all the way to Senegal. At a Street Net conference, which represents a global alliance of street vendor organizations, each group was invited to bring things to share with the larger conference. The group from Senegal shared the Vendor Power Guide, something Basinski thought “was cute.”⁵⁹ Despite the guide only sharing rules and regulations for New York, it represented something vendors of Senegal were proud of and wanted to share with their peers.

⁵² S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

⁵³ S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

⁵⁴ S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

⁵⁵ S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

⁵⁶ S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

⁵⁷ S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

⁵⁸ S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

⁵⁹ S. Basinski, personal communication, February 19, 2020.

It is clear after speaking with both New York street vendors and vendor advocates that the guide has been a critical tool for vendor empowerment and has created waves of positive change for vendors in New York. Not only has it helped vendors navigate terse moments with ill-informed police, it has paved the way for more comprehensive education materials from the city, and even become a source of pride for vendors around the world. The continued role of the Street Vendor Project seems to have been a big part of the guide's success, and highlights the importance of institutional and organizational presence when creating popular education tools. While staff at CUP that helped create the guide have not been involved with its distribution or use since its creation, SVP is still organizing around issues the guide talks about today,⁶⁰ and this continued work and support of vendors has been important. This isn't meant to be a critique of CUP, but rather emphasizes the importance of creating tools like the vendor power guide in coalition. The ongoing organizing work of SVP can be supported by CUP by highlighting campaign successes in the guide when they happen, but ultimately the guide is used as a tool for SVP campaigns and vendors on the streets of New York City.

The Vendor Power Guide is an example of a really successful popular education tool. It was created to help empower vendors and organize around SVP campaigns and has done this successfully for over ten years. Using models of insurgent planning, the guide exemplifies how popular education tools can be used around complicated land use issues and laws. The guide balances utopian thinking and SVP organizing principles while providing critical information to vendors that

⁶⁰ M. Attia, personal communication, February 18, 2020.

can help them navigate interactions with law enforcement. While the “magic” of the project is evident, it’s useful to look at examples of similar projects in other cities that have gone differently in order to understand the particular actions that led to the success of the Vendor Power Guide.

Secondary Cases:

This research follows Vinit Mukhija’s model of N of One plus Some, and as a result is an in-depth case study of one case, the Vendor Power Guide, which is complemented by secondary cases, Los Angeles and Santa Monica. As Mukhija explains, “in addition to the main case, some additional secondary cases [act] as an alternative strategy of developing a more detailed and in-depth understanding of the primary case” (p. 417, 2010). For this research, understanding how other cities have handled vendor education, and the process or perhaps even lack of process for creating education tools provides greater context to the success of the Vendor Power Guide. Rosten Woo has been involved with guides or potential guides for vendors in all of the cases covered in this research, and despite this constant variable, the outcomes and process in which vendor education has been approached in each city has varied greatly, further highlighting the importance of insurgency, design, process, and street vendor (or in a broader sense user) experience.

Los Angeles

The activism around street vendors in Los Angeles looks very different from New York, however, problematic education attempts by government agencies and

over-policing are similar themes. A campaign to create a legal permit program so vendors could operate in the formal economy took well over ten years to succeed, and since legalization efforts have succeeded, a lack of education and vendor confusion have become key issues for vendors and vendor advocates to tackle.⁶¹ To understand the vendor education landscape in Los Angeles I interviewed two of my former colleagues, Lyric Kelkar and Katie McKeon. Kelkar is a Senior Associate of Policy and Research at Inclusive Action for the City (formally LURN). Inclusive Action for the City has been integral to the Los Angeles Street Vendor Campaign since its inception and is currently a main organizational advocate for vendors in Los Angeles. McKeon is a lawyer at Public Counsel, the main legal organization advocating on behalf of street vendors in Los Angeles and played integral roles in legalizing vending in Los Angeles and California more broadly.

Both Kelkar and McKeon shared that in Los Angeles, vendor education is almost always reactive, and as a result has been confusing and often 'too little, too late.' "Vendors know how to vend, and the city needs a general mindset change, where vendors are co-collaborators for education projects."⁶²

McKeon adds, the city of LA "is not handling [vendor] education well at all." She explains:

The city of LA did this very interesting roll out of their new law. At the start of 2019 Los Angeles legalized vending and implemented almost all spatial regulations. At the start of 2020, vendors still needed to abide by those regulations but were also required to get a permit. However, the city did nothing to explain the rules or to provide explanation beyond code enforcement (Bureau of Street Services) officers having physical copies of the regulation mostly in English.⁶³

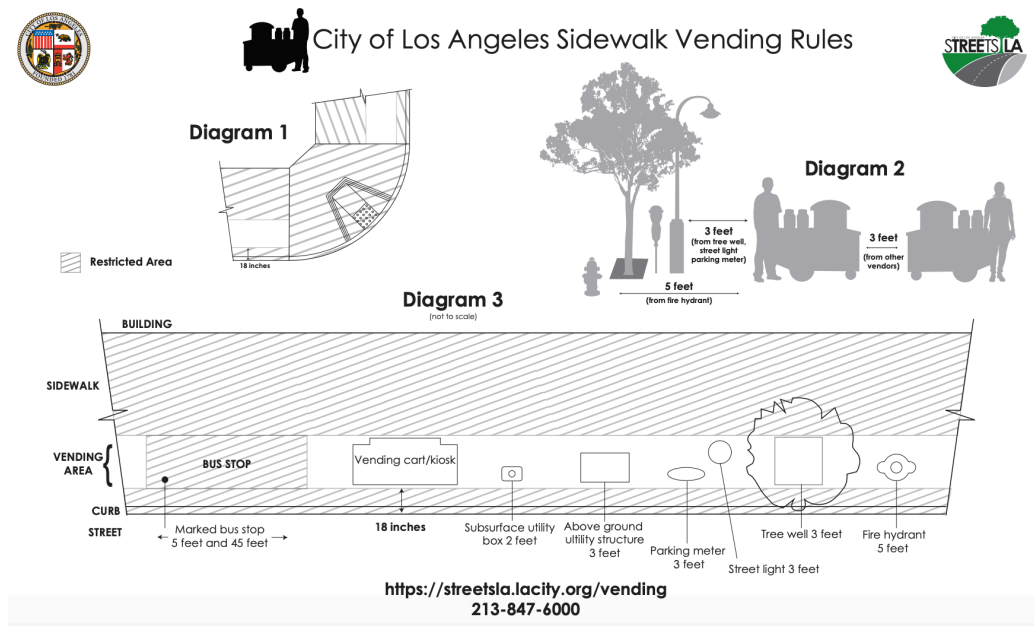
⁶¹ K. McKeon, personal communication, March 13, 2020.

⁶² L. Kelkar, personal communication, March 19, 2020.

⁶³ K. McKeon, personal communication, March 13, 2020.

This raised many concerns. Vendors in Los Angeles often don't speak English as a first language, some have literacy concerns, and until 2018, vendors had only had negative interactions with people in uniform.⁶⁴ Additionally, Bureau of Street Services (BSS) incorrectly communicated vendor laws on the handout they were giving to vendors, showing an umbrella in their visual diagrams, but consistently giving out tickets for umbrella use by vendors.⁶⁵ BSS has since re-designed the handout to not include an umbrella.⁶⁶

Figure 9. Bureau of Street Services Street Vendor Handout Without Umbrellas.



(BSS, 2020)

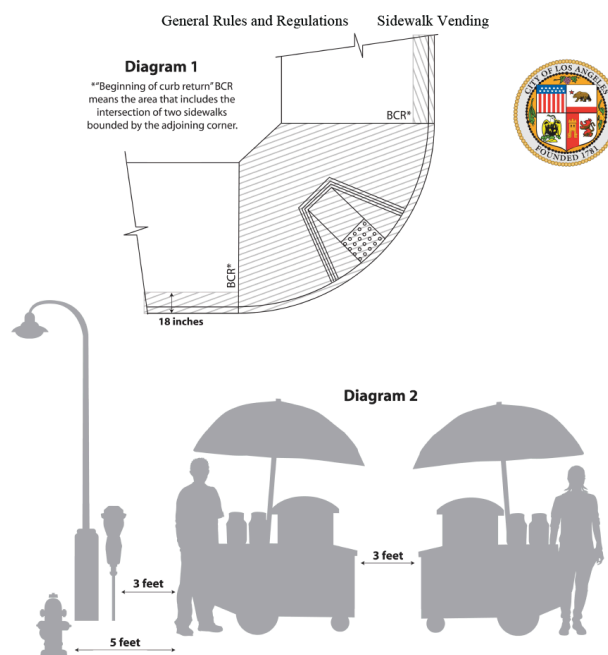
⁶⁴ K. McKeon, personal communication, March 13, 2020.

⁶⁵ K. McKeon, personal communication, March 13, 2020.

⁶⁶ K. McKeon, personal communication, March 13, 2020.

Before community push-back, Bureau of Street Services was handing out forms with umbrellas clearly shown in illustrations.

Figure 10. Bureau of Street Services Street Vendor Handout With Umbrellas.



(BSS, 2019, page 3)

In the summer of 2019, Rosten Woo, who now works in Los Angeles, was approached by Inclusive Action for the City to create educational materials. I was working at Inclusive Action at the time and was present for these interactions and meetings. Ultimately, the project still has not happened nearly a year later due to budget constraints, and rules and regulations that have been difficult to nail down since they have been very iterative, and BSS has been inconsistent with enforcement policies. The street vendor campaign in Los Angeles has created a

number of their own educational materials, and offered workshops to help vendors navigate new rules and regulations; however, a comprehensive guide like the Vendor Power Guide is still not finished.⁶⁷ Perhaps a different model will be best for Los Angeles, but resources will be needed to create further educational materials.

Similar to in New York, government agencies in Los Angeles have not been understanding of educational needs regarding laws and regulations for street vendors. While Los Angeles has a lot of organizations that do street vending advocacy, unlike one central organization like SVP, the two cities need to tackle education efforts in different ways. For one, funding is a concern. The city of Los Angeles is hoping to outsource a lot of the education needs for vendors but has not done this effectively. An RFP went out for education about permits that was due Jan 3rd, 2020 but vendors were required to have permits starting on the 1st of January.⁶⁸ Months later there are still no educational materials about permits.⁶⁹ While McKeon believes that popular education would be a good solution to some of these concerns, she notes that it needs time to work and for the tools to spread through a community.⁷⁰ Carla De Paz, director of community organizing at East Los Angeles Community Corporation, who has also been integral to organizing for street vending rights in Los Angeles, is quoted in an article discussing the city's approach to education for vendors: "There is a big disparity between the budget in the millions of dollars for enforcement versus the budget the city is spending on

⁶⁷ L. Kelkar, personal communication, March 19, 2020.

⁶⁸ K. McKeon, personal communication, March 13, 2020.

⁶⁹ K. McKeon, personal communication, March 13, 2020.

⁷⁰ K. McKeon, personal communication, March 13, 2020.

education, which is \$350,000. What is the city prioritizing? This is a terrible approach” (Cabral, 2020).

Santa Monica

In discussion with Los Angeles street vendor advocates, the city of Santa Monica asked about who might be best to create educational materials for vendors in Santa Monica.⁷¹ Rosten Woo had already been in discussions with the Los Angeles campaign and was recommended.⁷² Woo created two guides for Santa Monica, one for vendors and one for consumers, which he mentioned was a “similar [model] to the one made in New York.”⁷³ Woo says he was able to create the guides for Santa Monica, with an agreement that the design could be used for other cities.⁷⁴

Visually, the guide intended for vendors is similar to the Vendor Power Guide, using friendly illustration to convey rules and regulations. The guide for vendors is in English and Spanish and is written with the city as the narrator.⁷⁵ Woo says that the project was “better than a bunch of rules on a piece of paper” but that you can see how “different politics produced” the Santa Monica guide in comparison to the Vendor Power Guide.⁷⁶ It’s true, the Santa Monica vendor guides are purely explanatory, focusing on what is allowed rather than the flaws with rules and regulation and how they are impacting vendors like the New York guide. This clear differentiation shows how the motivation behind an education tool can change the

⁷¹ R. Woo, personal communication, April 9, 2020.

⁷² R. Woo, personal communication, April 9, 2020.

⁷³ R. Woo, personal communication, April 9, 2020.

⁷⁴ R. Woo, personal communication, April 9, 2020.

⁷⁵ R. Woo, personal communication, April 9, 2020.

⁷⁶ R. Woo, personal communication, April 9, 2020.

outcome. Woo described the project as “not the best,” stating that while it’s never a bad thing to have rules explained clearly, the friendly visual style may look like popular education but has different motivations.⁷⁷

Popular education is not purely a visual style. While the Vendor Power Guide encourages vendor allies to understand how the laws are unjust, the Santa Monica guide for community members gives considerations for consumers when purchasing from vendors. Considerations include looking for sanitary conditions, potentially hazardous foods, and approved vendor decals proving the vendor is registered with the city.

The city of Santa Monica should be lauded for proactively creating education materials for vendors. However, the guides are not accessible on the internet, making them difficult to access. Woo says he understood that they would be accessible online and in print, but says its “disappointing” this hasn’t happened.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ R. Woo, personal communication, April 9, 2020.

⁷⁸ R. Woo, personal communication, April 9, 2020.

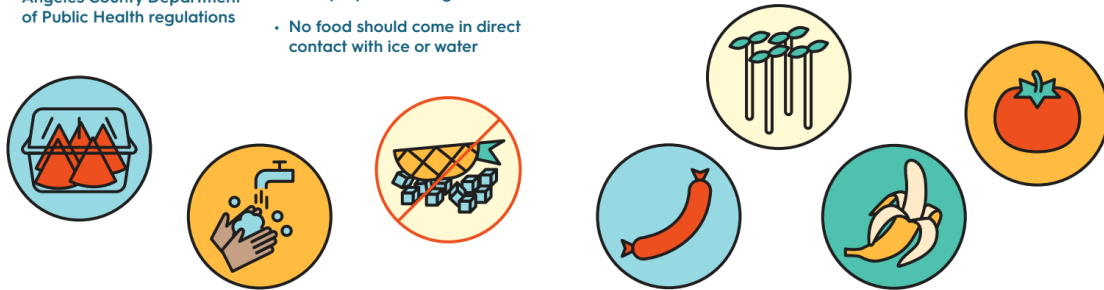
Figure 11. Santa Monica Guide for Consumers.

Know before you buy!

- Vendors are required to prep fruits and vegetables at a commissary before bringing to a vending site – if it looks like they are cutting or prepping food on location they are not abiding by Los Angeles County Department of Public Health regulations
- Look for a clean workspace and adequate equipment to keep food cold or cook it to temperature
- Carts should include a hand washing sink if there is any food prep or cooking on site
- No food should come in direct contact with ice or water

Potentially hazardous foods include:

- Meats whether raw or cooked
- Sprouts, cut melons and cut tomatoes
- Fruits that cannot be easily peeled (such as tomatoes) are less safe than those with an obvious peel (banana)



(Rosten Woo)

Figure 12. Santa Monica Guide for Street Vendors



(Rosten Woo)

The challenges described by informants in Los Angeles and Santa Monica related to vendor education allow for better context and clarity when understanding the success of the Vendor Power Guide in New York City. In Los Angeles, a lack of clarity about new laws and focus on enforcement over education leaves a vendor landscape craving educational materials that could ease confusion and protect vendors from unfair ticketing or arrests; part of the Vendor Power Guide's success came from the stability and clarity of the laws in place. While the demand is there in California cities, funding challenges and unfulfilled government promises have created challenges for vendor advocates in creating educational materials in the scale that they would desire. In Santa Monica, the government prioritized vendor education, hiring Woo to create tools, but used narratives that can be viewed as critical of vendors, and haven't made the tools accessible to the public⁷⁹. These challenges did not affect the Vendor Power Guide which was created in a political climate where laws were long-standing, there was funding and design support for the vendor advocate organization, and the narrative was driven by vendor experiences and needs.

Discussion:

The Vendor Power Guide is a powerful example of the impact and success a popular education tool can have when focused on a complex urban regulation. Not only did it receive recognition for being notable in the design world, it created change for vendors by giving them tools and legitimacy when interacting with law enforcement, helped SVP in their organizing efforts for vendors in New York City,

⁷⁹ Rosten Woo sent me the guides personally.

and offered an example for government agencies to follow when creating educational materials for vendors that are easy for vendors to understand. These are not small tasks, and it has stood the test of time, still being used by and handed out to street vendors eleven years after being created.

The “magic” of the Vendor Power Guide seems to follow a few themes. These themes exist at the nexus of popular education theory and how insurgent planning can take form in real life.

- **Funding and project management resources were in place before any work began.** This may seem small, but it is one of the biggest barriers to creating comprehensive vendor education in Los Angeles. CUP’s system-building for Making Policy Public and project management took the pressure off of SVP and made the project come together efficiently. CUP had grant money to complete the work, and as a result the project could be completed without financial help from SVP.
- **It was created because a community need was established, the laws it centered around were impacting large numbers of vulnerable people that sought legitimacy and protection, and vendor organizing was already in place within New York.** Without the membership and commitment of SVP, the guide would have been far less impactful or successful. SVP is the known contact for vendor advocacy in New York City, and having the guide be synonymous with their work ensures that vendors trust the guide. It has also become a useful tool for SVP to use when interacting with city officials in their efforts to create more just policies and regulations for vendors.

- **The Vendor Power Guide addresses unequal power relationships explicitly within its content.** The guide is clear in explaining why existing regulations are not acceptable, so anyone reading it can quickly become acquainted with SVP's organizing agenda.
- **Community members participated in the design process, ensuring that the content and product design was useful for their needs.** The design managed to tackle multiple needs, including components for vendors education and education about street vendors. The client model for the Making Policy Public project ensured that SVP's requests and needs were centered and fundamental to the end result.
- **The final product was created in a format that is easy to access and distribute to large numbers of people** – ensuring that vendors could access it easily and SVP could use it in community organizing efforts.

While the Vendor Power Guide focused on vending, this model could be extrapolated to many of the major issues planners focus on in cities.

Recommendations:

Urban planners work on complex topics that have rules and regulations with direct implications on people's lives all of the time. While perhaps not always at the fore of the job of a planner, education is a critical part of this work if planners are invested in addressing unequal power dynamics related to their work. This education work should not be neutral, and should be motivated by the relationship that popular education theory argues lies between liberation and education. **The field of planning has perpetuated and been responsible for harmful**

outcomes within cities, and planners looking to maneuver through and encourage participation around complex urban regulations should look to popular education as a tool of insurgency to combat imbalanced power relationships.

When planners find themselves working on complex issues and seek out popular education as a tool to implement within their work, there are some necessary components to consider. They are exemplified by the success of the Vendor Power Guide, and challenges seen in Los Angeles and Santa Monica.

- **Planners creating popular education should work in coalition with the community members that are going to use the tools and who are impacted most by the rules and regulations.** Educational materials should not be created within planning to merely check a box. While all forms of education attempts are usually better than nothing, visual tools that are liberative and created with community organizations are more helpful to community members and also help with distribution concerns.
- **Planners should work to create education tools that recognize the importance of democratizing education, and that address problems with the planning issue being explained.** The motivation behind the education tool, and consequential narrative, impacts if an educational tool is popular education. Planning should not be neutral, and the education materials created by planners need to reflect this value. This is reflected in the Vendor Power Guide, and a counter-example can be seen in the visual guides created for Santa Monica.

- **While there are many topics and communities related to urban planning that could benefit from educational tools, the best topics are ones that have community organizations involved, that are not in a state of flux, and that impact vulnerable communities.** Creating visual tools takes time and resources. Popular education can be extremely impactful, but takes time to start making impacts. It cannot be viewed as a band aid solution or quick fix. Additionally, there needs to be care taken that once educational tools are created, enforcement agencies and governments are familiar with the tools so that they are respected on the ground and not increasing the vulnerability of community members.
- **Lastly, planners creating popular education tools need to ensure the tools are accessible and easy to distribute.** If a tool is created then people need to be able to easily find it and use it.

Conclusion

This research argues that urban planners interested in practicing insurgent planning should utilize popular education tools to combat unequal power relationships related to complex urban regulations. This is not a neutral argument; just as insurgent planning argues planners should not stay neutral. Miraftab states that planners have a responsibility to disrupt oppressive relationships within cities, and that while neoliberal governance, often including planning, promises inclusive citizenship, the outcomes are often far from inclusive (2009). By highlighting the misleading or unfulfilling nature of many models of inclusion, insurgent planning appeals to informal practices of planning and citizenship as the antidote to

neoliberal agendas that perpetuate unequal power relationships. The Vendor Power Guide in New York City is an example of insurgent planning and highlights how popular education can be used as a tool for liberation related to complex urban regulations. The guide's design, creation process, and continued use by vendors and vendor organizers highlights how insurgent and popular education models can create long-lasting tools that help communities. The legacy of participation in planning highlights a desire for community engagement within the field and using tools like the Vendor Power Guide as a model for transforming systems highlights a future where planners can help navigate issues like over-policing and criminalization. Urban planners have a responsibility to ensure residents are informed of the rules that impact their lives and given avenues to navigate formal processes and advocate for fair and equitable laws. This makes our cities better, more robust and interesting places.

Appendix:

Access to Vendor Power Guide can be found here:

http://welcometocup.org/file_columns/0000/0012/vp-mpp.pdf

Interview List:

Rosten Woo, Los Angeles, February 10, 2020

Mohamed Attia, New York, February 18, 2020

John Mangin, New York, February 19, 2020

Sean Basinski, New York, February 19, 2020

Street Vendor (anonymous), New York, February 19, 2020

Informal Interviews with approximately 15 street vendors, New York, February 19, 2020

CUP Staff Interviews, New York, February 21, 2020

Street Vendor Leader (anonymous), New York, February 23, 2020

Katie McKeon, virtual, March 13, 2020

Lyric Kelkar, virtual, March 19, 2020

Rosten Woo, virtual, April 9, 2020

Interview Questions:

For vendors:

1. Can you please state your name and what city you work in?
2. Can you briefly tell me about yourself? What is your background?
3. Describe how you got involved with the Street Vendor Project or became aware of the Vendor Power Guide. What was happening in your life, what about the world or your profession?
4. Please Describe the Vendor Power Guide
5. Walk me through how the Vendor Power Guide came to be (if you were involved)
6. Walk me through what you did (or how you found out about it if you weren't a part of the creation process)
7. How did/does the Vendor Power Guide play a role in your daily life?
8. When you first became involved or received the Vendor Power Guide, how did you initially utilize the guide?
9. Do you still utilize the guide? Has the role it plays in your life changed?
10. How do you feel about the vendor power guide?
11. In one sentence, what was the takeaway of the Vendor Power Guide?
12. Would you call the Vendor Power Guide a success?

For Advocates (I shaped these questions depending on which city I was asking questions and project refers to vendor education):

1. Can you please state your name, what city you worked on this project in and what your profession is?
2. How did you become involved with the project? What is your background?
3. Describe how you became involved with the project. What was happening in your life, what about the world or your profession?

4. What did you do within the process? Describe what you did and how you did it.
5. Getting into the process, how did you make decisions?
 - a. Were collective decisions made? If so, how did these take place and who had final say?
6. What individuals and organizations were involved in the beginning? Did this change later on?
7. Did the project work as planned
 - a. Were there any unexpected outcomes?
 - b. What was the timeline?
8. In one sentence, what was the takeaway of the project?
9. Have you (or your organization) repeated any of the steps on more recent projects? If not, why?
10. Would you call the project a success?
11. What have been the outcomes of the project? Have they changed over time?

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